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423 dispersed areas. The chief would have his *ingo* (plural of *rugo*, residence) built on several hills, and usually establish one of his wives in each of them, to direct the centre entrusted to her. This is a very typical estate organization : it is based on polygamy.

The position towards cattle-owners

422 661 We have said that the *mwami* did not possess the land : neither has he any right of possession over the big cattle. The *mwami* would sometimes take cattle where he found them, but this was only a violent misuse of his tyrannical power. Batutsi and even Bahutu cattle-rearers are definitely the owners of their herds when, of course, the cattle are not simply entrusted to them.

231 431 357 These cattle can be given and this very thing adds a great deal to their worth, for those who desire them are naturally attracted towards those who own them. The king presents with cows the great who come to pay him homage. During the great annual sorghum festival, he ritually distributes cattle to some methodically chosen persons. The great men used to be surrounded, and are still, with a group of servants of various ranks : *ntore* (vassals who owed them a more important military aid than the average tenants), *bagendanyi* (young attendants charged to carry out their messages), *bakamyi* (young Batutsi entrusted with the milking of the cows), *abungere* who watch over the cattle), *bakevvi* (cooks), *inshoreke* (female attendants and servants). The most esteemed among these followers (*ntore*, *bagendanyi*, *bakamyi*) hope to receive cows one day, the *bakamyi* especially, on the day when they will leave the service to get married.

231 675 425 554 There are also the so-called cattle-contracts. Here are the most interesting of them : (1) A cattle-owner gives someone a cow, in exchange, the donee will later return a calf after the cow has calved two or three times. (2) An important owner gives several cows to a man who must in his turn permanently provide him with a milch-cow. (3) The owner of an important herd entrusts a man with the breeding of several cows which he may use for milk and manure ; one of the cows will be his if the herd has prospered.

In all these cases, the recipient becomes the liege of the donor (or the depositor). In some cases, the recipient is considered a near relative, even a son of the donor and marriage impediments ensue from the assimilation. On the other hand, the higher the donor is socially speaking, the less he tries to derive material profit from these transactions : his real profit is in the power he acquires over the person of the recipient.

423 425 *The relations between agriculturists*

Similar ties may exist between agriculturists. The

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time of the vote, they had considered it improper and impolite not to agree with their superior.

On the other hand, no superior enjoys a purely arbitrary power. There are norms which are informally enforced by social pressure; and this is particularly important for people so concerned about their reputations. Since, moreover, there are several chiefs of equal rank belonging to different political structures, it is not difficult for the subject of one superior to secure support in opposing him from another. Finally, there is the possibility of appeal to a higher authority empowered to control subordinate chiefs. All this limits, in fact, the authority of chiefs, but nevertheless the authority of a superior cannot be questioned by his subjects. They may escape, intrigue, or look for another protector, but they cannot offer direct opposition. The Western conception of contract, derived from Roman law, with well-defined obligations on both parties who are equal before and during the contract, is accordingly not understood or acted upon even by Banyarwanda who have long been familiar with our culture.

Any superior is a protector, and his protection is of the same character as his authority: all-embracing and limited only by his own convenience. In any difficulty, the inferior may ask the help of his master, and, if help is refused, it will not be on the grounds that the superior is not concerned with that aspect of the life of the subordinate. On the other hand, the superior himself will be the only judge of the limits of his intervention, for the dependent has no right to require anything from his superior.

Everywhere men in authority enjoy advantages denied to those whom they command, but it is often felt that justification is needed for these privileges. In Ruanda such rationalizations do not seem to be required. It is taken for granted by everybody, the subjects included, that superiors as such should derive profits from their position. The very high standard of living of Europeans is accepted without any criticism by 'traditional' Banyarwanda not yet imbued with egalitarian principles.

The conception of authority as all-embracing, unlimited, protective, profitable, and of inferiority as dependent, devoid of rights, fundamentally weak, and generally exploited, is exactly suited to a structure of castes composed of human beings who are thought to be fundamentally different and unequal. On these inter-caste relations all hierarchical relations have been modelled. This means that the conceptions and attitudes which have just been sketched pervade most human relations in Ruanda. Indeed, very many human interactions involve persons who, in Ruanda, are placed on a hierarchical scale: man and woman, husband and wife, mother and child, father and son, old and young, craftsman and apprentice, &c., and when there is also a superiority-inferiority situation, even though confined to one aspect of the relation, the whole of that relation is impregnated with inequality.

Another basic principle governing the field of human relations in Ruanda is that of indefinite reciprocity. Whenever somebody receives a service,

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[p. 129]

CHAPTER VI

THE CLIENTAGE STRUCTURE

1. DESCRIPTION OF THE *BUHAKE* INSTITUTION

571 675

THE *buhake* is an institution to which anthropologists who have studied Ruanda social structure have devoted a great part of their attention, if not the greatest. The name is not easily translated. *Buhake* comes from *guhakwa*, a verb meaning 'to pay one's respects to a superior in his court'.[1] It has been called cattle-lease (*bail à cheptel*),[2] recommendation (in the sense of the mediaeval latin *recommendatio*),[3] and contract of pastoral servitude.[4]

The *buhake* denoted the relation which existed between a person called *garagu* and another called *shebuja*. That relationship was created when an individual, Hutu or Tutsi, who had an inferior social prestige and who was less well provided with cattle, offered his services to and asked protection from a person whose status was higher and whose wealth was greater. The following sentences were usually, but not ritually said by the man offering his services, after he had given a jug of beer or hydromel to the other: *urampe amata* (I ask you milk), *urankize* (make me rich), *uramenye* (always think of me), *urambere umubyeyi* (be my father), *n'ange nzakubera umwana* (I shall be your child). [273]

If the offer was accepted, the man in the superior position bestowed on the other one or several cows. From that time on, they were in the institutionalized relation of *shebuja* (which I translate 'lord' or 'patron') and *garagu* ('client').

(*a*) *The client's rights*

The rights the client enjoyed over the cattle granted to him were those of usufruct: he had full rights of ownership over milk, the male increase of the cattle, and the meat and skin of a cow which had died or had had to be slaughtered. The female increase of the cattle remained at his disposal under the same conditions as the original cows given to him by the *shebuja*. Cows received

[1] Sandrart, 1930, p. 151.
[2] De Lacger, 1939, vol. I, p. 45.
[3] Vanhove, 1941, p. 48; Bourgeois, 1958.
[4] Kagame, 1952, p. 18.

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Cows received

from a patron could be granted by the client to somebody else by another *buhake* agreement in which the original client became a lord. The protection granted by the patron included support in lawsuits (*kulengera*): according to thirty-nine per cent. of our informants, it was usual and very useful to be accompanied by one's *shebuja* if one wanted to be judged by the mwami. Moreover the patron extended help to his client if the latter was in a state of poverty. For instance, he gave milk for the *garagu*'s children if their father's cows did not yield enough; he contributed to the payment of the bride-wealth if the client and his lineage could not meet the expenses; he provided his Hutu *garagu* with a hoe when it was needed; he granted meat and hides to his client if, on certain occasions, they were badly needed. When the *garagu* committed an offence, his lord had to help him out of his predicament by paying the fine or the compensation to the victim (*kugura*).[5] If the client was murdered and his lineage was too weak to do anything about it, the *shebuja* had to demand justice from the mwami or even avenge his death by blood feud (*kumuhorera*). Finally, if, after the *garagu*'s death, his widow and children could not be taken care of by his brothers or parallel cousins, the lord had to help them (*kumuremera*).

(*b*) *The client's obligations*

On the other hand, the client had to go and pay his respects to his lord. This included personal service which required the presence of the client at the patron's rugo for a certain time. Some obligations were common to Hutu and Tutsi *garagu*. They were: to accompany the *shebuja* when he was travelling, for instance when he went to the king's court or participated in a military expedition (*kumutabaraho*); to carry the lord's messages (*gutumwa*); to build or repair a part of the *shebuja*'s rugo (*kubak' inkike*). It was advisable also for clients, Hutu as well as Tutsi, to offer from time to time to their patron, some presents such as jugs of beer. If the lord happened to lose his herds, the *garagu* had to provide him with cattle and jars of milk. Some services were imposed only on Hutu clients, such as working in the *shebuja*'s fields (*kutanga imibyizi*), or joining the night watch in the lord's enclosure (*kurarira*).[6]

[5] Cf. Vanhove, 1941, p. 778.
[6] Cf. Sandrart, 1930, p. 152; Vanhove, 1941, p. 752.

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The measure of the different obligatory gifts and services (number of days, &c.), was not fixed. It depended on the *shebuja*'s temper, his requirements, the number of cows granted to the *garagu*, and on the client's expectations. Moreover, each client was usually not requested to fulfil all the obligations we have just mentioned. The patron, particularly if he had many *garagu*, frequently gave to each of them a precise task in which the client was particularly competent (to brew beer, to cook, to mind the cattle, &c.). Even now, in spite of the limitations added by the native courts to the clients' obligations (for instance the building and repairing of the enclosure cannot be claimed by the lord more than once a year; not more than a month a year may be required by the patron for all the household services, &c.), we are still far from having a list of precisely defined duties and claims standard for the whole of Ruanda.

(*c*) *End of the* buhake *relation*

The *buhake* relationship was perpetuated even after the death of both parties. The *shebuja*'s heirs inherited their father's relations of *buhake*, *vis-à-vis* his clients and the client's heirs kept the cows (and/or their progeny) granted to their father. But the *shebuja* had the right to refuse to recognize as a successor of his client a person without the proper qualities to be a good *garagu*. The lord could then designate another heir of his client, or end the relationship and take back the cows. The person receiving an important number of clients by inheritance (several dozen, for instance) could require them to present him with all the cows which were then numbered, as in the case of the army-chief's *murundo*; he could then choose a certain number of them, usually the best ones, which he took away from his clients either to keep the usufruct himself or to endow other people with them.

The *buhake* relation could be ended when both client and patron or only one of them wanted this. But the person who initiated the breaking off usually gave some reason for it, such as the non-fulfilment of a particular obligation by the other party. At all events the *shebuja* could not oblige his client to stay in his service and the client could not prevent his patron from dismissing him.

What happened to the cows in such a case? As mentioned earlier, all the cows a client effectively controlled were not necessarily received from a patron, that is to say they were not all *inkazibiti*

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when the client was Hutu and *ingabane* when he was Tutsi. A *garagu* could have cows from another source (called *imbata*) such as those received as bride-wealth, as a reward for bravery or acquired by exchanging other goods. In the case of a Hutu client, who possessed both *inkazibiti* and *imbata* at the time when his relation with a *shebuja* was broken off, there are two opinions with regard to the cows' ownership. According to the first, the *imbata* possessed by the client before he entered in the *buhake* relation were regarded as *inkazibiti* and consequently the lord had the same rights over them as over those he had given to the client as cows of *buhake*. Moreover, the cows which the client eventually acquired when he was already *garagu*, and which in other circumstances would have been regarded as *imbata*, were also added to the cows received from the lord. The result was that at the breaking off of the *buhake* relation, the patron could take all his client's cows, *imbata* as well as *inkazibiti*. The other opinion is that the *imbata* acquired by the client before or after the *buhake* relation began, remained definitely *imbata* and that the lord had no claim on them.

It seems that both opinions are accurate, but that they refer to different periods. The second probably expresses the most ancient rule which had been prevalent up to about 1920. The practice of merging *imbata* and *inkazibiti* (or *ingabane*) in favour of the lord is likely to have been introduced only during the last forty years. This would be due to the fact that the chiefs of the administrative divisions (recognized by the Belgian authority under the names of *chefferies* and *sous-chefferies*) assumed at the end of the reign of king Yuhi Musinga (who was dismissed from his royal charge by the Belgian Administration in 1931) an undue importance, because their powers were no longer counterbalanced by those of the chiefs of the other hierarchies. Army chiefs did not enjoy their former authority, as the military structure had received no official recognition; Musinga, isolated in an attitude of indifference and hostility towards Europeans, was left without much effective power. Administrative chiefs who were important lords are said to have taken advantage of this situation, and to have modified the custom to their own advantage by establishing the principle of the merging of the cows received from the lord with those acquired independently of any *shebuja*.

It was not impossible, though it was rare, to be the client of

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more than one lord, I was told. Firstly, the services required were such that it was not easy for the same person to perform them twofold. Secondly, a lord did not like to enter into *buhake* relations with somebody who was already the client of another *shebuja*, because such an arrangement was very likely to result in a considerable lessening of each lord's control on his client.

2. ANALYSIS OF THE CLIENTAGE STRUCTURE

(a) *Notion of feudality*

If the term 'feudal' is to be legitimately applied to the social structure described in the preceding section, it must be understood as a notion covering more than the historical sense of that term as used when referring to the Western Middle Ages. Feudality is here an 'ideal-type' in the Weberian sense.

Feudality is a particular ordering of certain human relations. This organization is based on an agreement between two individuals who unequally partake in the symbols of wealth and power culturally recognized in their society. The person who, in that respect, is inferior to the other, asks the other for his patronage, and, as a counterpart, offers his services. This is the essence of the feudal régime which must be found in any social system qualified by that term. Feudality is manifold in its modalities. The latter differ in many respects. For instance, obligations of each party may vary and be more or less definite in measure; the symbols and proofs of the feudal relation may be very dissimilar. Thus, in the European Middle Ages, the symbol and the proof of the feudal agreement was the tenure of a tract of land granted by the man in the superior position to the other. That piece of land was called a fief and the parties concerned became suzerain and vassal as soon as the tenure had been granted and accepted.

It seems that the qualification 'feudal' may be applied to the organization of social relations between a *shebuja* and a *garagu* described in the preceding section. At the root of that relation, there are two individuals having a different social status. From one of these individuals, there is a demand for aid and protection, and from the other a promise of assistance in counterpart of services. Granting the usufruct of a few cows to the man of inferior status is the symbol and proof of the agreement.

The word 'agreement' is employed here rather than 'contract' which is more frequently used in this connexion. I do not consider

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571 695 that the kind of covenant in which the bond *shebuja-garagu* originated can be said to be a contract in the sense given to that term of Roman law and legal systems which are derived from it. There are three main differences between a contract and the *buhake* agreement.

Firstly, the freedom not to enter into such an agreement was socially illusory. In a society such as that of Ruanda, it was most inadvisable to be found without a patron. As a proverb put it, 'a dog is not feared for his fangs, but for his lord'. To live without a lord was to invite trouble.

Secondly, the lord and the client faced very different situations when *buhake* relationships had to be ended. When he wanted to break off the relation, the *shebuja* either did not give any reason or more frequently accused the *garagu* of a breach of the agreement because in that case, even if there was no merging of *imbata* and *inkazibiti* cows, he could take one or two more cows as a sort of fine. Then he recovered the cows that he himself or one of his ascendents had granted to the client. Sometimes a client accused of a breach could manage to obtain protection elsewhere, and to bring the case before a court, whereas the *shebuja* was under no obligation to present the proof of his client's misdemeanour before punishing him by seizing the cows. He was thus in a very favourable situation if, for one reason or another, he coveted some of his client's cows, or if he merely wanted to harm him. Nevertheless, informants say that a lord could not take too much advantage of his capacity to punish and despoil his clients without incurring implicit social sanctions. If he got the reputation of being a bad *shebuja*, people who were considering a *buhake* agreement were led to choose another lord.

In the reverse situation, when a client wanted to terminate the *buhake* relation with his lord, he certainly could do so, but he incurred the risk of being deprived of some of his *imbata* and if he had grievances against his lord, it was certainly not easy for him to obtain redress. Here again, however, the situation could be corrected by the interplay of the safeguards that an able and cunning man did not fail to secure. Supported by his army-chief, his lineage head or his cattle-chief, he could obtain more favourable results. But even if these counterbalances had some efficacy, it remains that the lord and the client, because of these very different conditions, did not enjoy that equal freedom to end the

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relationship which should be enjoyed by both parties according to the classical definition of contract.

A third way in which *buhake* was different from the Western conception of contract lay in the vagueness and uncertainty in the measure of the reciprocal obligations. The patron could be more or less generous in the number of cows he granted, more or less exacting in the services he required; the client could be more or less prompt and zealous in his service. If there was a dispute about these differences in the execution of the agreement, there was no charter one could refer to for an assessment of rights and duties.

(b) *Caste structure*

To understand the functions of the feudal system in Ruanda society, one must first clarify some important features of that society.

As our descriptions and analysis of Ruanda proceed, it becomes more and more certain that there was there a caste structure or something very similar to it. Sociologists usually define a caste society as one composed of several graded groups, each of which is endogamous and practising an hereditary occupation, membership of which can be obtained only by birth.[1]

Birth was, indeed, the usual way in which one became a Tutsi, a Hutu or a Twa. This does not mean that the three strata were 'racial' units, but that an individual was a Tutsi, a Hutu or a Twa when his father was a Tutsi, a Hutu or a Twa. In the same way was his father a Tutsi, a Hutu or a Twa. But in order to avoid such expressions, which could go on *ad infinitum*, a definition other than an hereditary one should be found. But it does not seem that there is any other than that a Tutsi, a Hutu or a Twa is a person who regarded himself, and was regarded by all those who knew him, as a Tutsi, a Hutu or a Twa, the usual way for a person to fulfil this social definition being to realize the hereditary one. In some cases, however, it was possible to be socially recognized as a Tutsi without having been begotten by a Tutsi father. For instance a Twa who had been ennobled or the son of a rich Hutu cattle owner and of a Tutsi woman, was sometimes regarded as a Tutsi. But these were exceptional cases and we may say that the caste criterion of membership by birth held in general for all the three Ruanda groups.

The same may be said of the criterion of endogamy. We saw

[1] Cf. Lowie, 1948, pp. 10, 273.

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is made narrower in order to give everybody the opportunity of obtaining sufficient personal security.

Such was, it appears, the first function of the *buhake* system in Ruanda. In that society where it was advisable to go into court accompanied by socially powerful persons, and when a Hutu possessing some wealth but no protector was risking the loss of his possessions, the feudal organization, by institutionalizing the identification of the Hutu client with the Tutsi lord, secured the necessary protection and security for the socially weak. With a few exceptions, the Twa were outside that feudal system. Their caste occupations were not compatible with cattle-rearing and made available to them other means of obtaining the personal protection of upper caste people. On the other hand, their small number made that kind of protection very effective.

(*d*) *Social cohesion*

A second function of the feudality in Ruanda was its contribution to the cohesion of the society.

In this respect we have to distinguish the feudal agreements in which clients were Hutu from those in which they were Tutsi. Let us first take the former. In order that two castes whose interests were so often divergent or opposed could constitute a stable unitary structure, it was necessary that they should not remain merely juxtaposed but should show some solidarity. Through the feudal relations economic currents flowed between Hutu and Tutsi: the land tillers had at their disposal some cattle; the pastoralists consumed agricultural produce and had fields cultivated by their servants and clients. In this way the economic system of production in Ruanda was mixed, made up of techniques, abilities, and wealth brought by the two groups. Through *buhake*, Hutu participated in the Tutsi values. They valued cattle very highly and entered the prestige system based on bovine possession. They assimilated some Tutsi alimentary habits, such as drinking milk. Feudality proved a very effective instrument for the constitution of a culture common to all Ruanda.

When there was a feudal agreement between two Tutsi, the *buhake* had another relevance to social cohesion. It may be said that any Tutsi client was also a lord and any Tutsi lord was also a client. The mwami was the only patron who was nobody's client. His *garagu* were the great Tutsi chiefs, the lords of less important

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Tutsi, who themselves were patrons of still less important Tutsi, and so on. In this way the Tutsi consituted a homogeneous unit of individuals linked to one another by bonds of fidelity and protection. From that point of view, *buhake* contributed to the unity and the solidarity of the aristocratic caste.

(*e*) *Maintenance of caste privileges*

Besides the protection of socially weak individuals and the promotion of social cohesion, a third function was fulfilled by the feudal system: the maintenance of the social *status quo* and the perpetuation of Tutsi privileges. This function seems somewhat opposed to the first two. Let us see how all these functions have been combined by the *buhake* system.

In a stratified society where control of a category of goods or a type of ownership is characteristic of the superior layer, the access of the members of other groups to these goods or to the particular rights of ownership constitutes an active factor of social mobility. It is the reason why the aristocracy frequently keeps exclusively for itself these goods and these rights. Thus in Ankole the Hima pastoralists bar Iru cultivators from the ownership of productive cows. They may possess only barren cows and bull calves.[8]

Ruanda Tutsi did not impose such severe rules but by the *buhake* system they obtained very much the same results. They allowed Hutu to have cattle at their disposal—which in exchange provided Tutsi with labour and agricultural produce—but at the same time prevented them from gaining independent ownership rights over these cattle. Those who had the final control of cattle were always Tutsi. As the Hutu had been granted only usufruct rights over cattle which were different from those enjoyed by the lords who were Tutsi, there was no chance that the group of cattle owners could be invaded by Hutu.

By definition the client's possession was precarious. This uncertainty in the duration of the disposal of cattle was further emphasized by the circumstances mentioned above. The breaking off of the *buhake* relation was almost always favourable mainly to the lord and could often be disastrous for the client. It may even be said that when the practice of merging the *buhake* cows (*inkanibiti*) with the cows not received from a lord (*imbata*) was regarded as customary, all the Hutu cattle were precariously held and under

[8] Oberg, 1940, p. 130.

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Tutsi control. A Hutu who in exchange for labour or agricultural goods had been able to acquire a few cows had necessarily to ask for the protection of a lord in order that his cows should not be seized upon under some pretence by a socially powerful neighbour. Then he received cows from his lord and they were merged with his own *imbata*. Consequently, if the agreement had to be ended, the lord could take away besides the cows he had granted, those which had previously belonged to the client.

The two political structures benefited most those among the Tutsi who were rulers. The feudal structure, by granting only a precarious possession of cattle to the clients, left in the hands of the Tutsi the ultimate control of cattle, symbol of social prestige and instrument of power. On the other hand, by the same *buhake*, Tutsi were obtaining the advantages of being provided with labour and agricultural produce. From that standpoint, the Ruanda feudal system granted a minority the means to live—and to live better than the bulk of the population—without having to participate in the manual labour of economic production, by the moderate and clever exploitation of the majority.

In order that an aristocratic structure may perpetuate itself without change as long as it is profitable to the superior caste, it is not sufficient to prevent an invasion or even an infiltration of members of inferior groups who, by modifying the proportion between exploiters and exploited, would completely disturb the smooth working of the system. It is also necessary that all those who are by birth members of the upper caste should live according to the standards of their group. It is most unusual for an upper caste to regard the falling off of some of its members without uneasiness and dismay. This is particularly true when the group position of power is rationalized in terms of innate superiority. Some modern governments in Africa, for example, are much concerned about the 'poor whites' because their decadence threatens the myth of the white racial superiority.

The Tutsi had a similar pretence to a natural superiority as has been pointed out already. Consequently, if one of them was unable to support himself in a way becoming to his caste and seemed on the point of slipping down into the group of those who work manually, it was regarded as a shocking situation that should at once be put right. The remedy was to become the client of a richer Tutsi. The cows thus received, allowed him to subsist in

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such a way that he could become the patron of a few Hutu who would work for him and cultivate his fields. On the other hand, while the lord of such a Tutsi would not get many material advantages from him, his social prestige was enhanced by an increase in his following, and by being advised by a trusty Tutsi he was able to exert a greater influence in the different intrigues which played such an important part in his life.

(f) Feudal and political structures

We have said earlier that the Ruanda clientage system occupied an intermediate position between the public and private spheres. It must now appear more clearly why *buhake* was not just a private agreement between two persons, such as a loan. The element of pressure, although not going usually as far as the use of physical force, was certainly an important aspect of that relationship. There was also a constant interplay of the feudal structure of the two political ones (administrative and military). When, as frequently happened, one was at the same time administratively subjected to and a client of one's hill-chief, a client's obligations were not merely added to a subject's tribute: the total amount was reduced. This was a very favourable situation for the subject-client. All the great political chiefs were also rich lords. Their political offices helped them to increase their clientage, as is particularly evident in the case of the army-chief who could require cows from the army members merely in order to be able to gain more clients. On the other hand their wealth helped them to obtain important offices and to keep them.

It would be impossible, for these reasons, to describe adequately the working of the two political structures in Ruanda without describing the feudal system as well. It might even be said that the *buhake* is more fundamental in the sense that many political relations have been patterned on the client—lord relation. For instance, the army chief was really a lord for the members of the herdsmen's section of his army.

In spite of the psychological and perhaps historical precedence of the feudal system, it has been described after political organization because, as I wish to focus attention on the political organization, it seemed that the role of the feudal system in that respect would emerge more clearly.

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traditions were transmitted. But a multiplicity of kinship group agents cannot be entrusted with a function as important for the caste as the socialization of its young members and their training in the qualities and virtues which had permitted their forbears to obtain power. Consequently, in Ruanda some formal institutes of education and instruction were set up. The *intore* companies in which every young man of the Tutsi caste spent several years, fulfilled these functions.

In order to avoid the dogma of the innate superiority of the upper layer being questioned if one of its members had to be cast out because he was unable to live up to the standards of his group, the clientage system acted as an institutionalized means of rescuing such people. It should be mentioned that the rescuer was not losing anything, as the Tutsi saved from social death could give him in return what was mainly expected from any Tutsi client: his attendance and his councils.

The tendency which leads a powerful group to constitute a closed caste, to maintain jealously its advantages, and to try to increase them, cannot be left without something to counterbalance it. Each caste, as Linton says, is a society in itself.[8] If the caste accentuates too much the characteristics which make it a socially complete group, isolated in the society of which it is only one layer, the cohesion of that society may be destroyed. Consequently, powerful factors of cohesion are needed to check the tendency towards social disintegration that exists within any caste structure. I have described solidarity factors already, but they may be summarized here.

First, there are certain groupings in which Tutsi and Hutu were to be found together. Names of the Tutsi and Hutu clans were similar. This suggested a certain solidarity among the bearers of the same clan name, however minimal it was. A comparable kind of Hutu participation existed in the armies. It is possible that the fact of having been commonly associated in dangerous circumstances gave a deeper feeling of unity to Hutu and Tutsi. The Ryangombe sect was open to Hutu and Twa as well as to Tutsi. Ryangombe himself is said to have addressed his invitation to join to every Ruanda, explicitly calling the Tutsi, the Hutu, the Twa, the men and the women.[9] As initiation ritual took place among kinsmen, however, there was no real inter-caste mingling in the

[8] Cf. Linton, 1936, pp. 130 f. [9] De Lacger, 1939, vol. I, p. 257.

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ceremonies. We may say that clan, army, and sect were 'national' only nominally and superficially. Notwithstanding, these associations between Hutu and Tutsi had probably some limited significance from the standpoint of social cohesion.

In that connexion, *buhake* is a much more important factor. By that agreement, almost any Hutu was linked to a Tutsi, and partook in the social power of the upper caste by identifying himself with a protector who was a member of the dominant group. He obtained for his disposal some cattle, the symbol of artistic values, and he entered into exchange relationships with the nobility. Through the clientage institution, Ruanda constituted a unified economic system which distributed agricultural and pastoral products among the totality of the population. The personal bond with a privileged caste member and access to possession, however precarious, of cattle, seem to have been essential from the point of view of national solidarity.

A third integrative factor was social mobility, even as limited as it was in Ruanda. It is certain that the number of Hutu and Twa assimilated to Tutsi because of their holding of political offices or because of their wealth, has always been tiny.

The possibility of being accepted into the superior group even if it is illusory for almost all the members of the inferior group has had in many societies a very great integrative influence. It is well known that in the United States, during the first quarter of this century, the fact that a few men among the wealthiest of the country had been born poor, greatly contributed to the psychological solace of a considerable mass of men and women who had personally no opportunity to achieve such brilliant successes. In addition to individual comfort, the belief that there was no intrinsically insuperable obstacle (such as having been born outside a closed hereditary group) helped Americans to feel that they were all members of the same nation regarded as not significantly stratified.

I do not imply that the social ascent of a few Hutu has played a similar part in Ruanda. Firstly, there was no egalitarian ideology which makes almost unbearable the fact that one is obliged by birth to live in an inferior social group; secondly, cases of inter-caste mobility were extremely rare in Ruanda. Nevertheless, these cases were a proof for Hutu that, although not belonging to the upper stratum, they were members of the Ruanda nation as well as Tutsi. They did not feel that they were out-group people.

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did not play an important part in the feudal system because there were no socially recognized ties between a client and his lord's lord. Feudality was not a ranking system in the same sense as were the political structures. Each lord had his personal following; he was not as such the representative of a higher authority.

To sum up, the political and clientage structures at the same time secured the economic exploitation of the Hutu and protected them against an exaggerated pressure which could have led to disaster for the upper caste.

(c) *Delegation and centralization of political power*

Before the European occupation the kingdom's population was already numerous, probably around 1,700,000 inhabitants. The orographic configuration of the country made communications rather difficult. In that non-literate culture, an efficient collection of tributes required almost a face to face acquaintance between the subject and his ruler. These circumstances necessitated a delegation of authority to many intermediary chiefs who would be the local representatives of the rulers.

But such an unavoidable system was very dangerous for the central government. Its subordinated agents having frequently authority over a rather numerous population which could provide them with abundant supplies (if nothing was sent to the court) could be tempted to isolate themselves completely from the capital and become independent. Such a course of action would have been facilitated by the military structure and the feudal system.

Some important chiefs were, indeed, authorized to raise an army. Moreover, any military chief whose army was encamped near the border, in a district far from the capital, could gain such ascendancy over his warriors as to win over their allegiance to himself.

The *buhake* was perhaps still more dangerous because, as in any feudal system, it created personal bonds of allegiance between the client and his lord. As such, that bond of loyalty did not extend beyond the lord. One had to obey one's lord because he was one's lord and not because he was a mwami's representative. This is why any feudal system has always been so dangerous for a central government. Independence and revolt against the king have been recurring events in the areas where a feudal system existed.

Ruanda rulers were able to check successfully these tendencies

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subordinate's activities. This is not resented by the inferior as unbearable meddling. On the contrary, it is expected by the inferior who feels that such interference is a proof of the interest his superior extends to him. When a European employer avoids intruding into the privacy of a Ruanda subordinate, the latter not infrequently tends to interpret it as a withdrawal from the protective role expected from any superior.

If a subordinate were to refuse his Ruanda superior's interference on the grounds that he should not be concerned with his private affairs, such a pretension would be regarded as at least a definite lack of respect.

Theorem Four

Strictly contractual relations are not possible. To enter into a contract implies that the intended parties are previously independent of one another. If one is submitted to the other for the whole of his life, how could he freely commit himself to give the other certain services? And how could the other promise to secure his inferior a counterpart that the latter can legally claim? When entering into contractual relations, it is necessary that each prospective partner should be a person independent of and equal to the other in that context. In the Western world, admittedly, it frequently happens that an agreement which verifies the juridical forms of a contract is entered into by persons who are not independent and equal. Circumstances may exert such a pressure that freedom to accept or refuse a particular obligation is purely illusory. Conditions of independence and equality, however, are often realised. In ancient Ruanda such a situation could almost never have happened as it was rare for two persons who might otherwise be related by a contract, not to be already involved in paternalistic and dependent relations.

Moreover, after the contract has been concluded it is necessary that each partner should be able to defend himself against any demand of the other which would exceed the terms of the covenant, and that he should have the means to oblige the other to fulfil what the latter has agreed to give or to do. This implies again that one part is not completely dependent on the other. Now, as I mentioned earlier, the extent of the superior's obligations is left, in Ruanda, to his will and pleasure. Consequently, it was unthinkable for the party who was at the same time in a position

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inferior to the other to claim some particular fulfilment of the agreed promises from the other.

This appears clearly in the difficulties Ruanda often meet when they have to adjust themselves to European labour contracts. They are sometimes confused by the fact that the employer requires from them at the same time less and more than they expect. Less because the employer does not ask for more services, for longer office hours for instance, than what has been stipulated, and more because he is very exacting in the execution of what has been undertaken, for instance in matters of punctuality.

Theorem Five

With such socially accepted conceptions about inequality, those who occupy the superior positions in most of the social relations in which they are involved, tend to develop a permanent authoritarian behaviour. This is characterized by a propensity to command, to be self-assertive, arrogant, protective, and compassionate.

Chiefs, rulers, and other superiors try to extend not only the size or range of their power (the number of people controlled) but its density (the degree of control of the subordinates).[7] Any independence manifested by the inferior will be resented as rebellious.

This leads to intolerance. The superior's opinions should never be opposed by the inferior who is always and everywhere expected to manifest his dependence by attitudes of compliance. Even today this conduct tends to prevail. Some years ago a Ruanda deliberative assembly of people of standing was asked its opinion on a contemplated reform. After the most important person present there had given his opinion, everybody voted for his proposal. But after the meeting many expressed privately their divergent opinions. At the time of the vote, they had considered it improper and impolite not to agree with the superior.

Theorem Six

Even if the caste system and political and feudal institutions have succeeded to a large extent in moulding personalities in such a way as to make inferiors self-effacing, submissive, compliant, and dependent, the conditioning has not been perfect. Often the inferior wants to disagree with his superior's opinions, to avoid executing an order or obeying his commands. A straight refusal

[7] Cf. Russell, 1938, pp. 165 *f.*